

December 14, 2018

The Honorable Ajit Pai, Chairman
The Honorable Michael O’Rielly, Commissioner
The Honorable Brendan Carr, Commissioner
The Honorable Jessica Rosenworcel, Commissioner
Federal Communications Commission
455 12th Street, Southwest
Washington, DC, 20544

RE: MB Docket No 05-311 In the Matter of Implementation of Section 621(a)(1) of the Cable Communications Policy Act of 1984 as Amended by the Cable Television Consumer Protection and Competition Act of 1992

I am writing in support of Akaku Maui Community Television in the Second Further Notice of Proposed Rule Making. We oppose the tentative conclusions the FCC reaches in the proceeding because of their impacts on our community.

The FCC would define “In-Kind” contributions so broadly as to undermine the Cable Act’s intent to provide franchise fees to communities for use of public rights of way. Any non-monetary benefit could be charged back against franchise fees so we believe in many areas franchise fees might be eliminated in their entirety. Since, in Hawaii, Community Television is financed with up to 3% of cable revenues this FNPRM will decimate these valuable community resources, diminish educational opportunities, eliminate jobs, retard media literacy and do irreparable harm to community communications and civic engagement.

In Hawaii, the idea of “Empowering the Community’s Voice through Access to Media” really took hold. For more than 25 years, Akaku and its sister stations on Oahu, Big Island and Kauai have trained and showcased thousands of people. Many have gone on to professional careers in television and film. We’ve developed nationally renowned youth media, covered local election cycles and broadcast thousands of government meetings and community events. We’ve given equal voice to the establishment, the host culture, the unrepresented and the underserved.

The idea was not to benefit any one institution or special interest but to serve the general public: the unaffiliated, the disenfranchised, the popular as well as the unpopular, people who would otherwise not have a voice. The idea was also to help teachers and students in media training, advance media literacy, and encourage local democratic discourse by televising gavel to gavel coverage of government meetings.

By allowing cable operators to reduce franchise fee support for local communities if they opt for local channels is bad for our democracy and the FNPRM diminishes the ability of PEG channels to serve communities such as ours. We ask that it not be adopted.

Thank you.

Yours sincerely,
Linda Dorset
Community Member

in Hawaii, financed with up to 3% of cable revenues.

